

ONTA NEWSLETTER

Organization of Nematologists of Tropical America

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HOTEL DE LA BAHÍA, (Hotel Enjoy Coquimbo), La Serena-Coquimbo, Chile, site of the XLV ONTA Annual Meeting.

XLV ONTA 2013 MEETING

October 20-25, 2013 ~ La Serena-Coquimbo, Chile

The 45th Annual ONTA Meeting will be held in **La Serena-Coquimbo, Chile at the Hotel de La Bahía.**

A preliminary draft of the scientific program includes eight oral sessions and a poster event, which are planned during four days.

Continue in the adjacent column

One day will be dedicated to an agricultural field excursion in the representative agricultural operations of the area. A nematode workshop is also planned. Additional registration fees are required for attending this workshop. Registration cost for the meeting is **US \$350** for ONTA members and **\$375** for non-members. Registration will cover welcome reception, lunches, coffee breaks, field excursion, banquet and attendance to all scientific sessions. **Deadline for reduced cost registration and submission of abstracts is July 17, 2013.** On-site registration without the discount (**US \$400**) is possible. Registration cost for accompanying persons is **US \$120**; banquet and tour are not included. Events of the meeting will be held at the **Hotel de La Bahía**. **Cost of a double room** (for non-Chileans), is **US \$94/night**. More details concerning the registration, and hotel are listed on the meeting's website. Persons traveling to Chile for the first time are required to pay an entry tax of **US \$160** at the airport to enter the country. ONTA extends its thanks and appreciation to **Erwin Aballay** (Universidad de Chile), Chair of the Local Arrangements Committee (eaballay@uchile.cl) and his collaborators: **Paula Agudelo** (Clemson University), **Ingrid Moreno** (Servicio Agrícola y Ganadero, SAG), **Juan C. Magunacelaya** (Universidad Católica de Valparaíso), **Patricia Navarro** (Universidad de Chile), **Patricia Meriño**, **Mariela Espinoza**, **Carol Krauss**, **Gloria Peña** (SAG), **Patricia Flores** (BIOAGRO), **Hugo Pacheco** (SAG), **Enrique Tapia** (SAG), **María Teresa Illesca** (SAG) and other coordinators including **Rosa Manzanilla-López** (Rothamsted Research, UK), **Janete Brito** (Florida Department of Agriculture, USA), and **Paola Lax** (Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina). Further information about the meeting is available on ONTA's website (<http://www.ontaweb.org>).

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ONTA OFFICERS FACING NEW DUTIES

GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT Soledad Verdejo-Lucas



Soledad Verdejo Lucas (IRTA, Patología Vegetal, Cabrils, Spain) was inaugurated at the XLIV ONTA meeting held in Cancun, Mexico, September 2-7, 2012. **Soledad** was involved in the organization of the scientific program for the ONTA XLIII meeting in Coimbra, Portugal, when she was serving as ONTA Vice President. She is now in close contact with president elect **Paula Agudelo** and the Chair of the Local Arrangement Committee, **Erwin Aballay**. Together, they are preparing the scientific program and meeting arrangements at the local level for the coming ONTA meeting in Chile.

ONTA VICEPRESIDENT Paula Agudelo



Paula Agudelo (Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina, USA), was elected ONTA Vice-President in 2012. She will become President at the Meeting in La Serena-Coquimbo, Chile in 2013. Since her election, **Paula** has been collaborating with **Erwin Aballay** and his colleagues in the organization of the scientific events for the coming ONTA Meeting in Chile. ONTA members wish **Paula** great success in promoting and improving the Organization.



Jim Rich

Janete Brito

The ONTA Foundation is a non-profit corporation that was established in 1991 to advance the science of nematology. It provides travel funds to supports ONTA members (students and professors) and encourages excellence by organizing student competitions for best posters and oral presentations during ONTA Meetings. **Jim Rich** has served as Chair and/or Treasurer of the ONTA Foundation since its inception. Foundation assets have grown steadily under skillful managerial supervision. After almost 22 years of service, **Jim** has decided to leave his post of Treasurer, but will remain on the Board of the Foundation as one of the directors. The exceptional services provided by **Jim** are recognized and commended by ONTA members. The Board of the Foundation has appointed **Janete Brito** to replace **Jim** in his capacity of Treasurer of the Foundation.



REPORT OF THE XLIV ONTA ANNUAL MEETING Cancun, Mexico, September 2-7, 2012

The 44th Annual Meeting was a successful scientific event with the participation of about 70 nematologists from Mexico and other countries of the world. The excellent accommodations provided by the Local Arrangements Committee and the unusual dry weather enhanced the success of the meeting. Organizers of the Meeting included **Nahum Marbán Mendoza** (Chair), (Universidad Autónoma, Chapingo, Mexico) and his collaborators; **Rosa Manzanilla-López** (Rothamsted Research, UK), **Emma Zavaleta Mejía** (Colegio de Postgraduados, Mexico), **Paola Lax** (Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina) and **César Ornat Longaron** (Universidad Politécnica de Catalunya, Spain). Thanks to these individuals for making this meeting possible. The scientific program included: An opening lecture on perceptions, reality and the future of agriculture presented by **Dr. A.G. Appel** (Auburn University, USA). Session topics covered; advances on *Nacobbus* research, animal-parasitic nematodes, entomopathogenic nematodes, identification of novel new approaches for nematode identification of novel sources and molecular mechanisms of plant resistance to nematodes, major nematode pests and crop yield, nematodes as indicators of food webs

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and soil sustainability, nematode management, new approaches in taxonomy and nematode identification, novel strategies for the management of plant parasitic nematodes, physiology of plant defense against nematodes, and soil health and nematode-microbial interactions. A workshop on recent advances in molecular identification and diagnostic methods of the major nematode pests was organized by **Rosa Manzanilla-López** (Rothamsted Research, UK), **Janete Brito** (Florida Department of Agriculture, USA) and **Mariella Finetti-Sialer** (Italian National Research Council, Italy); with the contribution of **Manuel Mota** (Universidade de Évora, Portugal), **Manuel Mundo-Ocampo** (Depto. De Biotecnología Agrícola, Mexico), **Angel Ramirez-Suarez** (Centro Nacional de Referencia Fitosanitaria, Mexico) and **Sergei Subbotin** (California Department of Food and Agriculture, USA). This workshop was attended by students, agricultural and nematode regulatory specialists. The excellent oral, poster presentations and lectures provided the participants with a wide range of scientific information. ONTA members convey their appreciation and thanks to **Nahum Marbán Mendoza** along with his collaborators for the organization of this memorable meeting.

A photo of the workshop on
Recent Advances in Nematode Identification



Rosa Manzanilla-López (coordinator of the workshop), addressing the students and agricultural specialists during one of the workshop sessions.

2012 ONTA AWARDEES

The following ONTA members were recognized during the banquet at the 44th ONTA meeting held in Mexico.

Paola Lax (Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina), received the Distinguished Service Award. **Paola** was acknowledged for her outstanding service and dedicated efforts in strengthening the Organization.

Wilfrida Decraemer (University of Gent, Belgium), received the Special Award. **Wilfrida** was recognized for her long standing support of ONTA activities, teaching and fostering Plant Nematology in Latin America.

Nahum Marbán Mendoza (Universidad Autónoma, Chapingo, Mexico), received a Special Award of Appreciation. He was recognized for his longstanding support of ONTA activities and for organizing the 44th ONTA meeting in Cancun, Mexico.

Larry W. Duncan (University of Florida, USA) and **Terrence (Terry) L. Kirkpatrick** (University of Arkansas, USA), received a Citation of Special Recognition. **Larry** was recognized for fostering the transformation of Nematropica from a printed to an electronic journal. **Terry** was acknowledged for his dedicated supervision, improvement and financial support of ONTA's website.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

ONTA thanks **Michiel Thijssen** from **Brill Academic Publishers**, Leiden, The Netherlands, for donating nematological books that are bestowed on the first place winners of the student best poster competition. ONTA greatly appreciates Michiel **Thijssen's** support.

ONTA STUDENT POSTER COMPETITION

The **ONTA Student Poster Competition** was kindly sponsored by the ONTA Foundation through a generous gift from **Rodrigo Rodríguez Kábana**. The following students were recognized:

Paulo Vieira from Universidade de Évora, Portugal was awarded \$500 for his studies on the function of the *Arabidopsis* ICK2/KRP gene on cell cycle control during root-knot nematode feeding site development.

Deborah M. Xavier from Louisiana State University AgCenter, USA, was awarded \$300 for her studies on the population development of *Rotylenchulus reniformis* in a field over a nine year period.

Nicholas S. Sekora from University of Florida, USA, was awarded \$200 for his studies on the population detection of *Meloidogyne* species with FAME analysis.

ONTA TRAVEL AWARDS

Charles Overstreet, chair of the ONTA Foundation Committee announced that two travel awards of \$500 each were kindly sponsored by the ONTA Foundation through generous gifts from **Rodrigo Rodríguez Kábana** and **Charles Overstreet**.

The following students received these awards:

Ulises Gonzalez Güitron, Depto. De Biotecnología Agrícola, Mexico.

Ninfa Ruiz-Santiago, Instituto Politécnico Nacional, Mexico.

Paulo Vieira, Universidade de Évora, Portugal.

SELECTED PHOTOS OF ONTA AND STUDENT COMPETITION AWARDEES



Paola Lax
Distinguished Service Award



Wilfrida Decraemer
Special Award



Nahúm Marbán Mendoza and granddaughter
Special Award of Appreciation



Larry W. Duncan
Citation of Special Recognition



Terrence L. Kirkpatrick
Citation of Special Recognition



Student Best Poster Competition Ceremony. From the left: Rodrigo Rodríguez Kábana and Charles Overstreet (ONTA Foundation Director and Chair, respectively), student Alexander Klapp (USA), student Eduardo Souza Freire (Brazil), student Deborah M. Xavier (USA) (2nd place winner), student Paulo Vieira (Portugal) (1st place and travel award winner), student Vanessa S. Mattos (Brazil), student Edriana A. Lima (Brazil) and student Nicholas Sekora (USA) (travel award winner).

ONTA Executive Committee Meeting

Venue: Great Hotel Parnassus, Cancun, Mexico
2 September 2012

The meeting of the Executive Committee (EC) started at 4.50 pm. It was attended by the following members: **Erwin Aballay** (President), **Janete Brito** (Business Manager), **Aurelio Ciano** (ONTA representative at IFNS), **Marcelo Doucet** (Honors and Awards Committee Member), **Larry Duncan** (Editor of the electronic Version of *Nematropica*), **Renato Inserra** (Treasurer, ONTA Newsletter Editor), **Paola Lax** (Secretary), **Rodrigo Rodríguez-Kábana** (ONTA Foundation Director and ONTA representative at IFNS) and **Rosa Manzanilla-López** (Member at Large).

The following topics were discussed:

Approval of minutes of previous meeting: Electronic copies of the minutes from the meeting in Coimbra (Portugal) were sent by e-mail to EC members for their revision and approval. Minutes were approved by members of the EC and uploaded on the websites.

Annual reports: Printed versions of all annual reports (2011-2012) of EC members and Committees were handed out to the EC members attending the meeting. Renato Inserra highlighted the improvement of the financial situation of ONTA due to the increase in collection of membership fees.

Meeting in Cancun, Mexico: **Rosa Manzanilla-López**, representing the Local Organizer Committee, highlighted that **Nahum Marbán-Mendoza** got an advantageous package to hold the event at the Hotel Parnassus. She also indicated that some of the invited speakers to make oral presentations asked for financial support. She emphasized the need of obtaining financial support for speakers invited to present key talks at future ONTA meetings. **Janete Brito** suggested the possibility of increasing the number of sustaining members that might help to partially fund the travel costs of invited speakers. **Rosa Manzanilla-López** mentioned the importance of considering deadlines when organizing an event of this type, especially for sending invitations. In many countries, the date for requesting permission to attend scientific meetings is different, so the invitations should be sent as soon as possible.

Nematropica: New Editor in Chief, **Janete Brito**, made special reference to the good work conducted by **Pat Donald** as Editor-in-Chief of *Nematropica* and mentioned the need to find someone to replace her in her capacity at the end of her mandate.

Larry Duncan committed himself to contact **Pat Donald** and suggested trying to find volunteers that can cooperate with translation of abstracts in Spanish of the articles published in *Nematropica*.

Annual vs. Biennial meeting: The President, **Erwin Aballay**, indicated two important aspects to take into account: an annual meeting allows continuity; however, choosing possible localities to hold the meeting and having participants are becoming more and more difficult. **Janete Brito** stated that the annual meetings play an important role in promoting the interest in Nematology at the local level. Her views are shared by other longstanding ONTA members such as **Jim Rich** and **Rodrigo Rodríguez-Kábana**, who added that an annual meeting contributes to raise the interest of more students. According to **Rosa Manzanilla-López** annual meetings are important to increase the number of local nematologists. All the attendants concurred with these views and supported the idea of continuing to organize annual meetings.

Janete Brito suggested the possibility of holding the ONTA meeting in conjunction with other Scientific Societies, as it was done in Maceió (Brazil), with the Brazilian Nematological Society. **Aurelio Ciano**

agreed and proposed, as an example, the possibility of organizing the meeting with the Latin American Phytopathological Society.

Duration of ONTA Presidency: All the attendants agreed in maintaining the President position for one year.

ONTA operation manual updating: Rosa Manzanilla-López indicated the need to update it.

Encourage a more active participation of some of the members of the EC, ONTA delegates and the Regional Representatives: Rosa Manzanilla-López indicated that some EC members do not have an active participation, and added that they should be more proactive. **Rodrigo Rodríguez-Kábana** emphasized the need for a more active role of the President in handling ONTA issues. **Renato Inserra** proposed **Rosa Manzanilla-López** as the Chair of the Nomination Committee; all the attendants agreed with the proposal. Renato Inserra also mentioned the importance of reorganizing the Honors and Awards Committee. The replacement of **Jenny Escobar** with **Julia Meredith** was proposed; the attendants accepted the proposal. **Janete Brito** suggested that the President should send a letter to **Escobar** acknowledging the work done in the last years and inviting her to be a member of the Committee. **Janete Brito** proposed **Regina Carneiro** to replace **Myrian Tigano** as a regional representative of Brazil.

English version of ONTA website: The EC expressed concern about the ability of **Terry Kirkpatrick** to support and maintain the website any longer. **Larry Duncan** also indicated the need to have another server, probably paying for a private service if **Terry** is not able in the future to maintain the website. In that case, the frequency that the information is updated should be considered. **Janete Brito** stressed the importance of unifying the websites because it seems that ONTA has several sites: in English, and in Spanish-bilingual. The necessity to have a person responsible for its maintenance was emphasized by the members.

Next ONTA Meeting: **Erwin Aballay** commented that if the meeting is held in Chile, he already has some people who might help him organize the event.

Other issues: Rosa Manzanilla-López stressed the important reduction made in the registration fee for the next annual IFNS meeting in South Africa (2014), which was possible thanks to the sponsors' support. She also stated that she has received proposals of topics for symposia from societies of nematology for that event. She also mentioned the possibility of presenting a proposal along with another society. **Janete Brito** stated that she had proposed a session on root-knot nematodes because of the general problem they cause to agriculture worldwide and stressed the importance of the host race.

Rodrigo Rodríguez Kábana mentioned that someone should replace him as ONTA representative to the IFNS. In **Aurelio Ciano**'s opinion, **Rosa Manzanilla-López**, as Vice President of IFNS, can replace him.

The meeting was adjourned at 6.40 pm.

Minutes were compiled by **Paola Lax** (ONTA Secretary).

ONTA Business Meeting

Venue: Great Hotel Parnassus, Cancun, Mexico
6th September 2012

The Business meeting started at 4:55 pm. It was attended by the Executive Committee (EC) members: **Erwin Aballay** (President), **Aurelio Ciano** (Representative of ONTA at IFNS), **Janete Brito** (Business Manager), **Marcelo E. Doucet** (Member of the Honors and Awards Committee), **Renato Inserra** (ONTA Newsletter Editor, Treasurer), **Paola Lax** (Secretary), **Rosa Manzanilla-López** (Member at Large), **Nahúm Marbán Mendoza** (Local Arrangement Committee), **Charles Overstreet** (Chair of ONTA Foundation), **Rodrigo Rodríguez-Kábana** (Director of the ONTA Foundation), and about 20 ONTA members. The meeting was chaired by the President.

Approval of minutes of previous meeting: Printed copies of the minutes from the previous meeting in Coimbra (Portugal) were circulated among ONTA members. Minutes were also uploaded on the Organization's website for all ONTA members interested in reading them. They were approved by the members present at the Business meeting.

Obituaries: Prestigious nematologists who passed away during the last year were recognized and a moment of silence was held to honor them: **István Andrassy** (August, 2012), **Jan van Bezooijen** (January, 2012), **William Sherrill Gazaway** (March, 2012), **Gerald D. Griffin** (2011), **Pat Haydock** (August, 2012), **Brian Kerry** (October, 2011), **Peggy Sue King** (March, 2012), **Daniel Orion** (April, 2012), and **Gregor Yeates** (August, 2012).

Officers' reports: Printed copies of the annual reports from the President, Treasurer, Business Manager, ONTA Foundation, Honors and Awards Committee, Newsletter Editor, Editor in Chief of *Nematropica*, ONTA website and Secretary, were circulated among ONTA members present at the business meeting. Those reports will be uploaded on the Organization's website for consultation.

Vice-President election: **Paula Agudelo** (USA), was declared winner of the office of Vice-President.

Local arrangements: **Nahum Marbán-Mendoza** indicated that about 80 people participated in the meeting. The low attendance was due mainly to economic problems. **Rosa Manzanilla-López** stated that availability of economic support to fund some of the participants, especially students, is an important issue to take into account for upcoming events. She also indicated that the Poster Student Competition and the Travel Award are not enough to raise their interest. She made special reference to the organization of the workshop that was held during the meeting, which was attended by 16 people. It was possible to grant fellowships to some students thanks to the efforts of the organizing committee.

Manuel Mundo-Ocampo suggested that given the bad economic situation, the meeting could be held in more convenient places, such as a university; this would also attract more students. **Rosa Manzanilla-López** indicated that holding the meeting in a university not always warrants safety to attendants. **Ignacio Cid del Prado** mentioned the need to train human resources and to stimulate students to present their works in those events. He also suggested organizing the meetings in agricultural localities where the problems caused by nematodes could be observed. **Rodrigo Rodríguez-Kábana** reminded that the aim of ONTA is to rotate across the Americas. In the case that students do not have economic resources, ONTA may approach them. In addition, he indicated that a symposium to be organized by students at the meeting was cancelled for lack of participants. **Rosa Manzanilla-López** mentioned that the information she sent about the symposium remained unanswered.

Roberto Vargas stressed the importance of defining a policy for all ONTA meetings in the future, not just for the next event.

Gladis Munera asked why the workshop was held simultaneously with the sessions and not on another day. **Rosa Manzanilla-López** replied that such decision of holding it simultaneously was made for economic reasons.

To finish with that topic, **Rodrigo Rodríguez-Kábana** proposed a symposium run by students in the 2013 meeting. On the other hand, **Manuel Mundo Ocampo** proposed that the meetings be held in localities of economically easier access (both in terms of registration and accommodation) and close to agricultural areas so that students can participate. All the attendants approved both proposals. The President ended by stressing that the organizing committees should help students with fund raising, not just with a more accessible place.

Next Annual meetings: It was decided that the next event will be Chile in 2013. Possibilities for future ONTA annual meetings were Cuba, in 2015, and Puerto Rico, in 2016.

ONTA Website: The President stressed the need to unify the different websites in a single site; for that purpose, it will be necessary to contact **Cesar Ornat** (web manager of the Spanish version) to evaluate the possibilities of doing so. He also indicated the need to change the server and, if possible, of recruiting someone responsible for maintaining the site. **Roberto Vargas** suggested that ONTA may hire a company to construct the site and that a member could then be responsible for the updates.

Other issues: **Rosa Manzanilla-López** indicated the need to promote the participation of EC members and their regional representatives. She suggested sending them a questionnaire to be forwarded to their colleagues to know how many nematologists there are in their countries and invite them to join ONTA. She also stated that the representatives can't always collect the membership fees in their countries due to economic problems. **Roberto Vargas** stated that the profile of regional representatives should be defined and efforts should be made to collect membership fees. **Rosa Manzanilla-López** made reference to the Operation Manual that has been revised and proposes to upload it to the internet website so that members can have access to it and can accept or reject the suggested changes. She also mentioned that they can find information on the following IFNS meeting on the Internet website (South Africa 2014); those interested in making suggestions can contact her. She also highlighted the discount on the registration fees made thanks to the support of sponsors.

Regarding poster presentation in those events, **Damaris Godinez** proposed that the poster sessions be made in the morning and not in the late afternoon hours to promote participation of the interested attendants. In turn, **Ernesto San Blas** proposed that the public also should give an opinion about the best poster at the Poster Student Competition, which will be added to the opinion of the panel of Judges.

Janete Brito proposed **Lee Simon** as member of the Committee of Sustaining members.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 7 pm.

Minutes were compiled by **Paola Lax** (ONTA Secretary).

ONTA WEBSITE

Terry Kirkpatrick, chair of ONTA website committee, informs that a team of website experts consisting of himself, **Miguel Talavera** and **César Ornat** are reorganizing the website. A major objective of this reorganization is the amalgamation of the English and Spanish websites in a single bilingual one. The new website will contain dropbox links and should be updated.

NEMATOLOGIA MEDITERRANEA

The editor of the Newsletter informs ONTA members that the journal *Nematologia Mediterranea* will not be published any longer. This journal was founded in the early 70s by the late Prof. **Franco Lamberti** and has been for 40 years a major source of important nematological information from the Mediterranean region and other countries. The editorial format and scientific content of the journal were improved by the new editors **Nicola Greco** and **Ken Evans** who edited the journal since 2004. This disappointing event for the Science of Nematology was caused by a shortage of funding. This issue of the Newsletter includes the Farewell published by the two editors in the last issue (40, 2) of *Nematologia Mediterranea* (2012). The insertion in the Newsletter of the Farewell should be considered as a gesture of gratitude and appreciation of ONTA members to **Nicola Greco** and **Ken Evans** for their longstanding dedication and efforts in maintaining the scientific quality of *Nematologia Mediterranea*.

FAREWELL

This year *Nematologia Mediterranea* is pushing its 40th volume. In 2004, when we accepted the hard work of editing the journal, we did it with enthusiasm. Just a few years later, because of cuts in the funding of research, the journal finds itself receiving no more support from the owner and its publication has been possible only thanks to the income from subscribers to the journal and to generous contributions of several chemical companies operating in Italy; we thank all of them very much. Unfortunately, a situation that was supposed to last for a short time is still continuing. This does not allow us to ensure the publication of the journal in the coming years. Therefore, we decided to resign as editors of *Nematologia Mediterranea* and leave to the owner of the journal, the “Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche” (National Research Council of Italy), the decision on the future of the journal; a decision that while this issue is printed has not yet been made. Despite these difficulties, our experience as editors of *Nematologia Mediterranea* has been very rewarding because it has given us the privilege of sharing in advance the results of research and to be in contact with colleagues from all over the world. Therefore, we are grateful to all authors who trusted in the journal and in us by submitting their manuscripts for publication and we are sorry that any manuscripts had to be rejected; this was done solely with aim of maintaining the high standard of the journal. If you, authors and readers, have enjoyed the journal, please realize that this has been possible because of the enthusiasm and hard work of all of the many helpful colleagues, most specifically members of the editorial board of the journal and of many others who have accepted the responsibility of acting as referees. Their cooperation has been instrumental in putting manuscripts into good final shape. To all of them goes our special thanks and appreciation. Finally, we hope that all of those of you who used to submit manuscripts to *Nematologia Mediterranea* will find other journals suitable for your publications. **Nicola Greco** and **Ken Evans**,
December 2012.

IN MEMORIAM.....

KARIN GERBER (1955-2013)

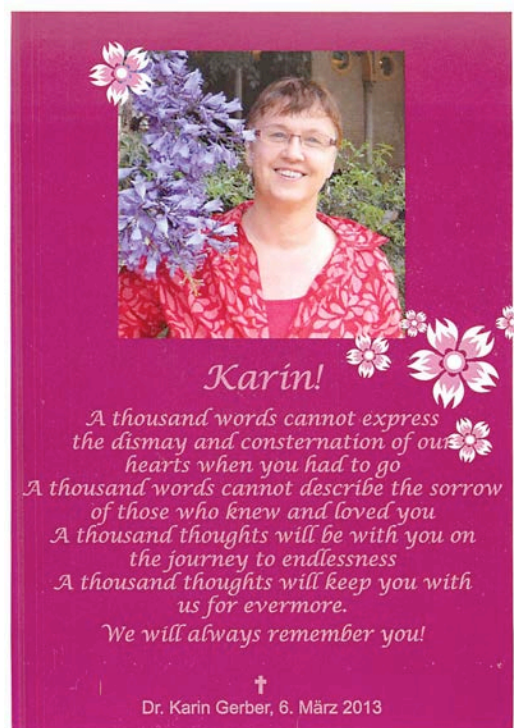


Robin Giblin-Davis (University of Florida/IFAS) informed us that **Karin Gerber**, a nematologist from Austria, passed away on March 6, 2013. **Karin** conducted extensive studies on the red ring disease of coconut in Ecuador and the Caribbean Basin. **Robin** wrote the following biography for her.

“**Karin** was my first postdoctoral associate (1986-1989) and we worked together on the “red ring” or coconut palm nematode (*Bursaphelenchus cocophilus*). She came to me after working as a postdoc with Dr. **Grover Smart** in Gainesville on developing a comprehensive list of the plant-parasitic nematodes associated with aquatic and wetland plants. She helped set-up our lab in Centeno, Trinidad with Dr. **Reginald Griffith** and also networked with Dr. **Jenny Escobar-Goyes** to pursue aspects of the biology and taxonomy of the nematode associates of the chief palm weevil vector of red ring disease, *Rhynchophorus palmarum*. She was a great friend who visited us in southern Florida and many of her colleagues in Gainesville several times over the years as she migrated south to the Caribbean for visits with old friends there. She loved the people and the colorful sari dresses of Trinidad and the neotropics, and the exotic fruits and flowers and animals and plants of the region. She also hosted me and two of my children over the years in her beautiful hometown of Mondsee, Austria. This is very near Salzburg, where they filmed the “Sound of Music”. When she finished her postdoctoral stint with me she returned to Austria for a governmental job devoted to the monitoring of fields for seed potato production to reduce the spread of the potato cyst nematode, *Globodera rostochiensis*. It was in that job that she discovered that she had developed breast cancer. She had surgery to remove the cancer and lymph nodes which was extremely painful and was declared cancer free for a long while before it recurred. I remember a message that she sent to me after having a bad time with the disease in 2010/2011. She travelled to the Caribbean then and wrote, “My trip to Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago was simply wonderful, especially since we had a hard winter in Austria and I enjoyed the sun and the warmth of the Caribbean. A year ago I never imagined that I would be able to do that, I was very low then. After 2 weeks my various pains were gone and I could also walk much better. I felt so free....away from the white... (snow and doctor’s coats..). It was my personal therapy. In Jamaica, I stayed with my friend Carol (Jamaican), she has a beautiful house up in the Blue Mountains (about 30 minutes drive from chaotic Kingston), the air is fresh and the temperatures cooler, just perfect. I just love the tropical vegetation, maybe I was born on the wrong side of the globe?” In the end, I am glad that she struck out to see what was on the other side of the world and in that journey she connected with many of us and made the world a nicer place. She will be

missed. In 2006, we named *Bursaphelenchus gerberae* in her honor for a nematode that she discovered many years before in Trinidad.”

The following Commemorative card was sent to **Robin** by **Karin**’s family.



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